

KENTUCKY STANDARD FOR WORLD LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

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Why Language Learning is Important: Preparing Students to be Globally Competent

It is vitally important for all Kentucky students to be prepared to engage with the world.

In the words of Anthony Jackson of the Asia Society:

In matters of national security, environmental sustainability, and economic development, what we do as a nation and in our everyday lives is inextricably intertwined with what governments, businesses, and individuals do beyond our borders.

Twenty-first century lives are not lived in isolation. We go to school with, work with and live in neighborhoods with people from other cultures who speak other languages. Our state's economy depends strongly on the international trade of small and large Kentucky businesses. Foreign companies invest billions of dollars in the Commonwealth and provide us thousands of jobs. We engage in citizen diplomacy and military actions with hundreds of countries both at home and across the globe.

For nearly everyone in today's world, English is an absolute, but in America, **English alone is not enough**. Our country's geographic isolation and the global importance of English have contributed to our false sense of security in regard to our need for world language competence. To compete academically, economically and politically, and function successfully in a global society, American students need to be globally competent—and that means being able to communicate and interact effectively in **at least one other language and culture**.

Today, in 20 out of 25 industrialized countries, students start their formal world language learning in grades K-5. Twenty-one countries in the European Union require nine years of language study. International business leaders are warning us that American graduates competing for the same jobs as their peers from other countries, may be technically competent but are increasingly culturally deprived and linguistically illiterate compared with graduates from other countries.

BEING ACADEMICALLY PREPARED

College readiness requires that students have the pre-requisite coursework for admission and that they have the knowledge and skills to succeed in entry-level classes.

Kentucky universities require world language learning for admission, in fact, both the University of Kentucky and Western Kentucky University require a demonstration of a specific proficiency level.

Success in post-secondary classes is most often described as:

- Strong intellectual growth throughout the primary and secondary years.
- The ability to think critically and problem solve in the context of a continuously changing set of circumstances and realities.
- The advancement of literacy skills.
- The capacity to communicate effectively with individuals from a variety of cultural and professional backgrounds.

World language learning, particularly when begun in strong elementary school programs, **spurs cognitive growth, builds literacy, and enables students to effectively interact with others in diverse cultural contexts**.

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Research has found that learning another language, particularly at a young age, has significant **cognitive benefits**, such as increased memory function, critical thinking, and mind-mapping skills, creativity, and flexibility of mind. With its activities in decoding, shifting between different symbol systems and divergent thinking, language learning is an exercise in problem solving, whose benefits transfers to other content areas. Studies have shown that students who are learning another language out-score their non-foreign language-learning peers in the verbal and, surprisingly to some, the math sections of standardized tests.

By engaging in learning a world language students build 21st century **literacy skills** essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. When students learn a second language they build proficiency in three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing). They learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language, similar to what is required to meet the Kentucky Core Academic Standards for English Language Arts.

Study of a classical language bolsters an understanding of the mechanics of language, vocabulary and the history and literature of the ancient world. Acquiring a Romance or Germanic language involves learning an additional phonetic system, a new vocabulary and extra language conventions. Learning an Asian language means learning to read by character recognition and write by following precise stroke steps to form a single character that may represent a word or phrase. Additional skills for college readiness are addressed when modern language learning is set within a cultural context, is content-based, uses technology, and connects with global community partners.

Content-based programs, such as dual language immersion initiatives, start early and develop students' advanced language proficiency in specific areas, such as mathematics, general science, physics, and chemistry. Students who graduate from these programs are not only ready to enter local universities, but universities in a country whose language they studied. In fact, many students who graduate from Kentucky programs, such as the Mandarin Chinese Flagship pipeline program and International Spanish Academies, have automatic entry into universities in those countries.

BEING PREPARED FOR THE WORKFORCE

Both business and government urge the addition of linguistic and cultural competence to the core knowledge and skill set of a world-ready graduate.

Since its 2006 report was published, the U.S. Committee for Economic Development has been calling attention to the importance of language and cultural skills for U.S. **economic security**. They warn that America's continued global leadership is at risk and will depend on our students' abilities to interact with the world community at home and abroad.

Kentucky's growing economic stake in international trade and the diversity of Kentucky's trading partners and investors create a demand for Kentuckians who can apply their world language skills and cultural competency to **business**. Exports to foreign countries contributed more than \$22.1 billion to the state's economy in 2012, with products and services going to 199 countries. Direct foreign investment employs over 90,000 Kentucky workers. To stay competitive Kentucky needs a **multilingual workforce** and an **international mindset**. International relationship marketing relies on cultural understanding and communication—to be really successful, you have to speak the customer's language. The youth, who will one day lead our state's economic

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expansion in international trade and foreign investment, whether through small business or multinational corporations, need advanced language skills and cultural know-how.

The modern languages taught in Kentucky support the state's economic mission. Kentucky's top trading partners include: Canada, Mexico, Japan, the UK, Brazil, France, Belgium and China. Our state's largest foreign investors are: Japan, the UK, Germany, Switzerland, France and Canada. Taking our message overseas, the Governor and Cabinet for Economic Development officials have recently traveled to Japan, Taiwan, Germany, France, Mexico and Panama to attract new business.

A report in the Journal of Business & Economic Research on Kentucky's preparedness for the coming wave of Hispanic immigration to some parts of the state, warned that a lack of preparedness in cultural understanding and language skill will cause financial and social challenges to certain regions. Among the study's recommendations, were that managers and co-workers learn basic Spanish language, become aware of their own English jargon and slang, and begin to recognize their own and others' cultural practices and perspectives.

The cost of monolingualism is high. The Kentucky World Trade Center reports that each year, businesses, state and local education agencies, government offices and private organizations pay large fees to hire interpreters and translation services or provide language training to employees (i.e., business and legal professionals, medical staff, fire and police workers, court employees, etc.) These costs are passed on to citizens. By preparing students with the language skills they need while in they are in school, this cost can be drastically reduced, if not avoided.

Schools can offer classes that are dedicated to a specific career path, such as Spanish for health careers or agriculture, French for culinary arts, German for business, etc. Asian and Arabic languages are much in demand for government posts. Study of American Sign Language provides a pathway for work as an interpreter. In programs preparing students with a minimum of pre-advanced language proficiency, job shadowing or short-term internships can be arranged locally and/or internationally. But it's important to remember that most jobs require intermediate and advanced level proficiency, necessitating an early start and long sequence of study.

BEING PREPARED FOR THE MILITARY AND CITIZEN DIPLOMACY

The military has long called for improving foreign language skills and cultural capabilities to meet 21st Century national security challenges. Knowledge of other languages and cultures is seen an essential key for mission success of military personnel overseas, required of officers and those in the war colleges (West Point, Air Force Academy, etc.), and recognized with Foreign Language Proficiency pay to active duty soldiers and qualified National Guard and Reservists. As far back as the 1960s, experts complained about the lack of language training in the United States, but it became a prime national security concern with the war on terrorism.

In 2004, a Department of Defense-sponsored study noted that the DoD should treat developing second language skills and regional proficiency as seriously as it treats combat skills. In the past five years, all branches of the service have developed strategic documents to guide the development language and culture skills within their ranks. Fort Knox has an officer designated as Language Advocate to promote language study throughout the state for a more-prepared recruit population.

The National Security Language Initiative, begun by President George Bush in 2005 and coordinated by the State Department, Department of Defense and the National Intelligence Agency, aims to increase the number of Americans speaking critical need languages and communicating at high levels of proficiency. Related summer

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STARTALK and pipeline Flagship (i.e., Western Kentucky University) programs support schools in building students' critical need language proficiency.

Students who study a modern language can become citizen diplomats--individuals who help shape U.S. foreign relations 'one handshake at a time.

HOW DO WE COMPARE WITH OTHERS?

Foreign countries that outscore US students in math and science on international tests are the same countries that require early language learning of at least one, and as many as four, foreign languages. Many English speaking countries are initiating or strengthening their world language requirements for students: Australia will have a national world language curriculum in 2014; since 2012 England has required world language study beginning at age 7; Scotland's "two plus one" initiative plans to teach two languages in primary school in addition to a child's native language; and Canada is a bilingual (French/English) nation.

Other states are initiating large scale, state-funded, world language programs. In 4 years Utah has gone from 4 to 54 dual language immersion programs, based on legislative funding. Delaware's has an aggressive Governor's World Language Expansion Initiative to begin world language instruction by K or grade 1. North Carolina uses technology to provide world language student self-assessment tools linked to their standards.

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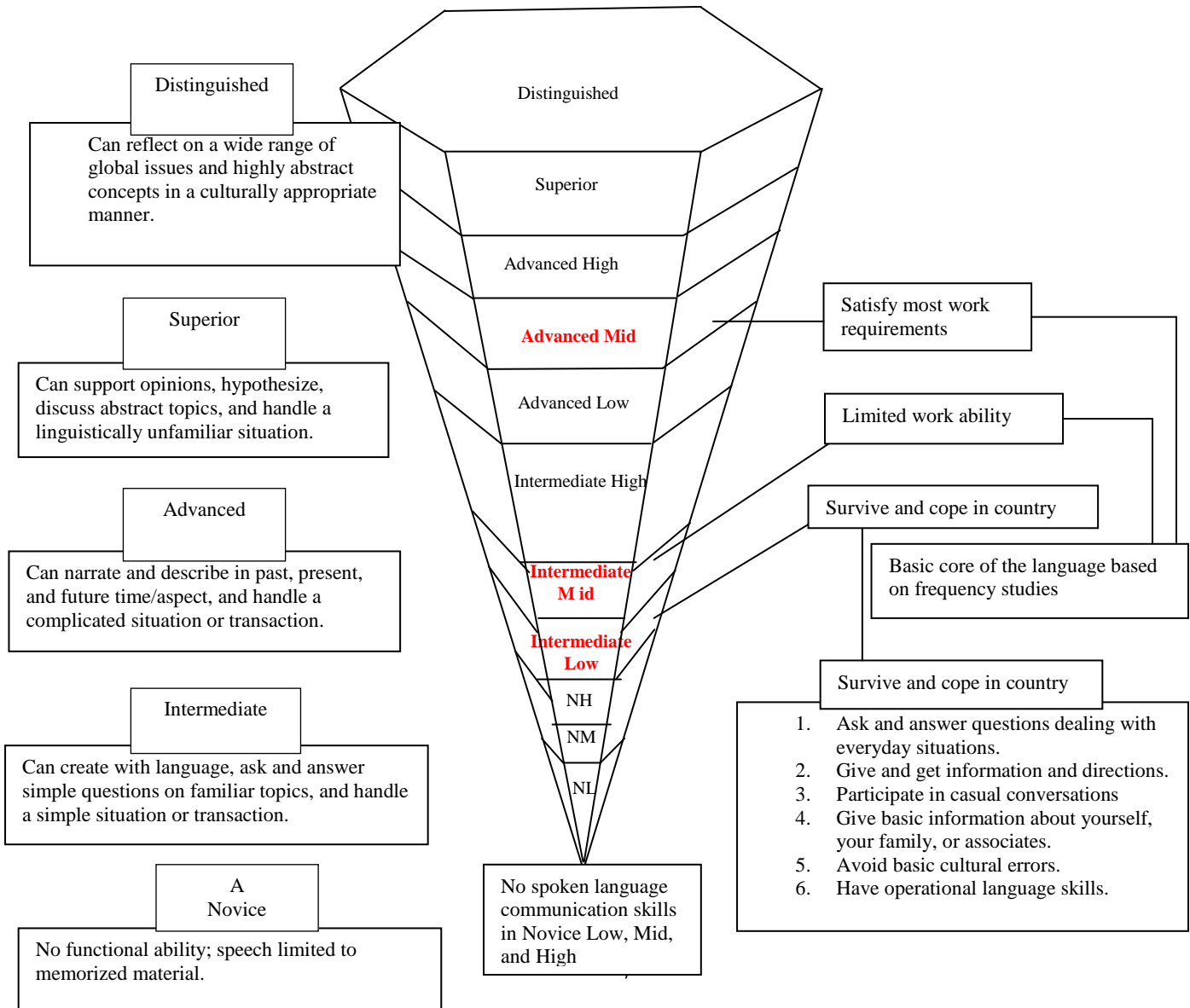
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- What is the *Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency*?

The *Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency* is a description of the competencies a Kentucky world language learner should demonstrate at three of five proficiency levels as defined in the *2012 American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines*. These guidelines are a description of what individuals can do at five levels of proficiency in speaking, writing, listening, and reading. They imply spontaneous and non-rehearsed performance in a real-world context. The three proficiency levels used for this document, novice, intermediate, and advanced, are further subdivided into low, mid and high sublevels. The highest levels of superior and distinguished are not included, as they are generally not considered expected outcomes of k-12 learning.

The ACTFL Proficiency Pyramid



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- **What changes were made from the 2009 to the 2013 *Kentucky Standard World Language Proficiency* and why was a revision necessary?**

The basic proficiency approach, format and structure, and use of LinguaFolio® can-do statements in the 2009 standard document remain the same in the 2013 revised version. These elements have served as a model for other states' world language standards. In 2012, however, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages revised the LinguaFolio® can-do statements in order to align them more closely to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. It was, therefore, necessary to update the Kentucky standard's can-do statements to reflect the national guidelines for proficiency.

Another reason for revising the standard document was to adapt it to address Classical Languages (Latin and Greek) and American Sign Language (ASL).

Finally, intercultural competency can-do statements were developed to replace the self-reflective approach to addressing interculturality and give guidance to teachers and learners in charting intercultural progress on the proficiency scale.

- **What is the rationale behind the 2013 *Kentucky Standard World Language Proficiency*?**

The proficiency approach to language learning focuses on performance and aims to build learners' capacity to use the language(s) of study a high level of proficiency in functional and meaningful ways in college and life. In this way it prepares students to be college and career ready and builds state and national language capacity to strengthen our national defense strategies and to improve the Commonwealth's and the nation's economic competitiveness. Equally, it develops the critical language and cultural competency skills that are needed for relationship building—a keystone for success in global business and diverse social environments.

It is the responsibility of the state's educational system to prepare students to compete in an increasingly international job market and to live in an increasingly diverse world. Foreign investment and international trade play an integral role in the Commonwealth's economy and both have grown dramatically in recent years. All are significant and vital parts of the state economy. Demographics of the state have also changed and the census shows a growing number of homes where English is not the home language.

Demonstrating proficiency in a language other than English offers potential benefits to learners. Career and technical education programs provide opportunities for learners to obtain industry-recognized certificates that document their skill attainment. Language proficiency can also be documented through a variety of nationally recognized assessments and used in portfolios for potential employment. Military careers now require officers to have second language proficiency and offer incentive pay to recruits and Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) members. Additionally, candidates with world language proficiency are highly recruited for career opportunities in agriculture, health care, law enforcement, and business.

The rationale for the creation of this document stems from the need to provide a transparent, learner-friendly document that clearly describes benchmarks of what learners can do with language and culture at various stages. Its intent is to recognize that everyone can learn a language, to motivate learning and increase achievement through goal setting and self-assessment, and to facilitate building functional language skills and interculturality. The standard, benchmarks, indicators and targets are meant to guide learning, and should be shared with learners and made available to parents and other stakeholders.

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- **What is the purpose of the *Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency*?**

In general, the purpose is to clarify the process of language learning. The standard document helps motivate learning by showing how to set achievable goals, self-assess and chart progress by using “I can” statements that facilitate this process. Learners, thus, take ownership of their individual language development. The standard document guides the facilitation of language learning toward more functional, communicative and intercultural goals, rather than those of language structure and cultural fact. It provides examples of learning targets that can be used regardless of age, grade level, or content studied. By posting or citing daily learning targets and celebrating success, teachers can model behavior that leads students to become autonomous learners. This document provides a clear understanding of what learners need to know and be able to do to move from one level to the next.

For learners, the purpose is to:

1. demystify language learning by simplifying and clarifying the process.
2. provide clear descriptions of what can be done with language at various levels and make expectations more realistic.
3. offer examples of small, incremental, and achievable goals that learners can use as models to set personal goals, self-assess, and chart their own progress.

For teachers, the purpose is to:

1. guide facilitation of language learning toward more functional, communicative and intercultural goals, rather than those of language structure and cultural fact.
2. provide examples of learning targets that can be used across ages, class levels, or content studied.
3. suggest learning experiences, scenarios, and integrated performance assessment tasks.
4. provide a cross-check for ensuring that each mode of communication and skill is addressed at each level.
5. clarify what learners need to be able to do in order to move from one level to the next.

For parents, administrators, and other stakeholders, the purpose is to:

1. demonstrate how world language learning has moved from a focus on grammar and translation toward effective communication, literacy, and cultural interaction.
2. demonstrate how the shift has occurred in classical languages from decoding and translation to interpretive reading proficiency.
3. define exactly what is expected of learners at different levels of proficiency.
4. emphasize real-world application for language use.

- **Why does the *Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency* apply to all learners regardless of grade level?**

Learners begin new language experiences at different ages and progress toward proficiency at different rates. The amount of quality time spent in the target language (i.e., immersion vs. high school level I) is a determining factor in the proficiency level that learners will reach. Learners at similar ages frequently demonstrate varying proficiency levels in all three modes of communication when assessed. The *Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency* outlines the progression of learner skills, making it easier for teachers to identify a learner’s skill level and to differentiate learning for all learners.

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- **How does the *Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency* apply to heritage speakers?**

Learners bring a variety of languages and cultures to Kentucky. They may have learned a language at home, in another country, or through local communities. Some may decide to pursue the study of their native language, while others may decide to study a different language. When heritage speakers choose to continue their native language, differentiated learning must take place to meet their needs.

When determining the placement of heritage speakers in language courses, consideration should be given to proficiency levels rather than seat time. Within language courses, the performance indicators allow teachers to set class goals while, at the same time, allowing learners to modify them to meet their own personal learning goals. Heritage speakers may demonstrate varying levels of proficiency across the three modes of communication: interpersonal, interpretive and presentational. For example, they may perform at a higher level of proficiency in the interpersonal mode than in the presentational mode. The benchmarks and indicators identify the learner's skill and modify the learning experience to meet the learner's needs. When possible, specially designed language courses for heritage speakers are optimal.

- **How does the *Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency* align with the *Common Core State Standards*?**

"The *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* contains four strands: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language.

These four strands are represented in the *National Standards for Learning Languages* by the Communication standards (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational) and the level of proficiency demonstrated. In addition, the standards of the other four goals areas for learning languages – Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities – also support and are aligned with the Common Core. These standards describe the expectations to ensure all students are college-, career-, and world-ready.

The Common Core strands of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening are captured in the standards for learning languages' goal area of Communication, by emphasizing the purpose behind the communication:

- Interpersonal (speaking + listening or writing + reading)
- Interpretive (reading, listening, viewing)
- Presentational (writing, speaking, visually representing)" (www.actf.org)

It is important to note, however, that there is not a direct grade-to-grade alignment, mainly due to the fact that time on task differs greatly for someone learning English and using it throughout the school day and someone learning a second or third language.

For more information go to

http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Aligning_CCSS_Language_Standards_v6.pdf

- **How is the *Kentucky Standard for World Language for Proficiency* organized?**

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STANDARD: Every learner will use a world language, in addition to English, to engage in meaningful, intercultural communication, understand and interpret the spoken and written language, and present information, concepts and ideas in local and global communities. Through learning the language, learners will connect with other disciplines and gain an understanding of the perspectives of other cultures and compare the language and cultures learned with their own.

Summary of Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century

The content of the *Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency* is organized according to the national standards, blending the two focus goal areas of Communication and Cultures into one standard. The remaining goals of Connections, Comparisons, and Communities are embedded within Communication and Cultures.

The language competencies are the three modes of communication:

- interpretive listening and reading,
- interpersonal communication, and
- presentational speaking and writing.



The intercultural competencies are:

- investigation of cultures' products and practices
- understanding of cultures' perspectives (ways of thinking), and
- interaction, bridging one's own and the other's culture.



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Document Organization

Language Competencies define the modes of communication:
One-way Receptive Negotiation of Meaning

Interpretive Listening
Interpretive Reading
Two-Way Communication
Interpersonal Communication
One-Way Productive Communication
Presentational Writing
Presentational Speaking

Language Competencies	Intercultural Competencies
1: Interpretive Listening (IL) and Reading (IR) I can interpret information, concepts, and ideas from a variety of culturally authentic sources on a variety of topics.	Investigation of the Target Culture's Products and Practices I can use my language skills to investigate the world beyond my immediate environment.
2: Interpersonal Communication (IC) I can exchange information, concepts, and ideas with a variety of speakers or readers on a variety of topics in a culturally appropriate context.	5: Understanding the Target Culture's Perspectives I can recognize and understand others' ways of thinking or acting.
3: Presentational Speaking (PS) and Writing (PW) I can present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics in a culturally appropriate context.	6: Cultural Interaction I can use my language skills and cultural understanding to interact effectively in a cultural context other than my own.

Intercultural Competencies define the skills needed for successful interaction with native speakers through the knowledge of a culture's products and practices to an understanding of that culture's perspectives (beliefs, values, attitudes, etc.)

Novice High (NH)

Novice is one of the three levels of proficiency (Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced) with sublevels low, mid, and high.

Learner Benchmark NH IL Interpretive Listening	Learner Benchmark NH IR Interpretive Reading	Learner Benchmark NH IC Interpersonal Communication	Learner Benchmark NH PS Presentational Speaking	Learner Benchmark NH PW Presentational Writing	Learner Benchmark NH 6 Cultural Interaction
NH IL 1 can understand some ideas about familiar topics expressed in phrases, simple sentences, and frequently used expressions. I can understand the main idea in short conversations, messages, and announcements.	NH IR 1 can understand some ideas from simple texts that contain familiar vocabulary.	NH IC 1 can communicate and exchange information about familiar topics using phrases and simple sentences. I can understand information suggested by material in language I can usually handle when used in a variety of contexts by using a variety of strategies.	NH PS 1 can provide basic information on familiar topics using phrases and simple sentences.	NH PW 1 can write descriptions and short messages to request or provide information on familiar topics using phrases and simple sentences.	NH 6 1 can recognize some very familiar products and practices related to family, daily routines, and celebrations in the target culture.
Learning Indicators	Learning Indicators	Learning Indicators	Learning Indicators	Learning Indicators	Learning Indicators
NH IL 1 I can understand some short conversations or descriptions.	NH IR 1 I can understand information I read on familiar topics.	NH IC 1 I can exchange some personal information.	NH PS 1 I can describe aspects of my daily life using phrases and simple sentences.	NH PW 1 I can describe aspects of my daily life using phrases and simple sentences.	NH 6 1 I can identify what makes up the basic parts of the target culture and what they might be typically seen. NH 6 2 I can recognize simple differences between my school schedule and that of a peer in the target culture. NH 6 3 I can recognize some basic differences in the status of families in the target culture.
Sample Learning Targets	Sample Learning Targets	Sample Learning Targets	Sample Learning Targets	Sample Learning Targets	Sample Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can understand short conversations about activities and sports. I can understand conversations related to daily life and routines. I can understand short descriptions of people I know. I can... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can understand information from advertisements, brochures, lists, menus, or schedules. I can understand personal notes, emails, or postcards. I can understand some ideas from simple texts that contain familiar vocabulary. I can... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can ask and answer a basic address and email address. I can ask and answer someone's nationality. I can ask and tell about family members and their characteristics. I can ask and tell about friends, classmates, and teachers. I can... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can describe my family and friends. I can describe my school. I can describe my neighborhood. I can describe my workplace. I can... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can write a description of my family and friends. I can describe my school. I can write a description of myself. I can write describe my work place. I can... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can sometimes use a target culture schedule for family activities. I can sometimes use a target culture calendar to identify a date.

Learner Benchmarks are broad summary statements of what learners can do at specific proficiency levels. They allow learners to chart their progress on the continuum of learning.

Sample Learning Targets are specific examples of functional language goals for a unit or lesson. Learning targets are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART). Each series of **Sample Learning Targets** includes a blank "I can" statement as a reminder that learners and teachers can customize targets to meet individual needs.

Learning Indicators deconstruct the benchmarks to show the range of functions that learners can expect to experience and attain.

Reading the Nomenclature: Numbers and Letters

Each core competency begins with the benchmark abbreviation of the proficiency level, such as Novice Mid (NM). The second pair of letters indicates the mode, such as Interpretive Reading (IR). Finally, the number of each indicator is given. For example:

NM.IR.1 = Novice-Mid, Interpretive Reading, Indicator 1

NM.IR.2 = Novice-Mid, Interpretive Reading, Indicator 2

NM.IR.3 = Novice-Mid, Interpretive Reading, Indicator 3, etc.

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- **How will the *Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency* be used?**

Districts, schools, programs, and independent learners will

- create long-range program proficiency goals reflective of a shared vision.
- identify proficiency benchmarks for assessment at designated intervals.
- develop a backward-design plan to support learners in meeting identified proficiency benchmarks.

- **How will teachers use the *Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency* to plan?**

In order to make the best use of this document, teachers will apply the principles of backward design to curriculum, unit, and lesson planning. The premise of backward design consists of three stages:

1. identify the desired results;
2. determine what evidence demonstrates that learners have achieved those results; and then
3. plan learning experiences that match. (Wiggins and McTighe).

The desired results are defined as the learning benchmarks (general) and the learning indicators (specific). Learners demonstrate proficiencies through Integrated Performance Assessments (IPA's) (a series of real-world tasks that assess the interpretive, interpersonal and presentational modes of communication).

As teachers implement the document they use the

- *standard* as the mission and vision that drives all language-learning decisions.
- *core competency* “I can” statements to ensure that all elements of language learning and interculturality are appropriately balanced.
- *benchmark* statements to establish the expectations for learner performance at the identified proficiency level.
- *learning indicators* to identify measurable, attainable goals.
- *sample learning targets* as examples of real-world contexts that can facilitate and motivate language learning.

- **Why and how do teachers and learners address intercultural competencies?**

The need for language competence in a global society touches every sector of life. From career preparation in an international workforce to citizen diplomacy and national defense to one's role in a social or virtual community, communication across cultures is key. Learners today must have the language proficiency to communicate with global audiences, the insight into the cultural perspectives that shape those audiences, and the ability to behave appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts. The series of can-do statements organized around the language proficiency levels (*2012 ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines*) guides learners in their development of such linguistic and intercultural competencies.

Intercultural competence, therefore, is the demonstration of interaction between the use of language skills and cultural knowledge. The national *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* highlights the need for learners to understand the relationship between a culture's perspectives and its products and practices. A culture's perspectives reflect the values, beliefs and attitudes of its people. Through contact with products (i.e., monuments, laws, music, etc.) developed by a culture and practices (eating habits, shopping behaviors, use of space, etc.) demonstrated by its people, we come to understand the perspectives (i.e., values, attitudes, beliefs, etc.) of a people.

KENTUCKY STANDARD FOR WORLD LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Demonstrating intercultural competence requires both the ability to use the language and to behave appropriately in cultural contexts. This may be particularly challenging for learners in the early stages of language learning, who may not have the linguistic skill to address cultural perspectives in the language of study. It is the responsibility of all those who facilitate language learning - be they teachers in Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES), immersion, middle/ high school, virtual or after-school programs - to provide opportunities for learners to experience language and culture together. Learners and educators must recognize that language and culture are inseparable. This requires the near exclusive use of the language of study. Thus, as language proficiency grows, so will intercultural competence.

Just as the proficiency level can-do statements of novice, intermediate, advanced, and superior are cumulative in nature for language competencies, they are cumulative for intercultural competencies as well. Learners demonstrate evidence of novice-level competencies first, and then add evidence of intermediate-level competencies and so forth. They continually add to their repertoire as they move up the proficiency continuum, applying knowledge of products and practices before developing and applying an understanding of perspectives. The interaction of language and cultural competencies thus results in interculturality.

Unlike the language benchmarks and indicators, the interculturality can-do statements are not divided into low, mid, and high sublevels. Learners are expected to demonstrate the interculturality benchmarks when they have demonstrated the highest language proficiency sublevel. For example, learners who have demonstrated novice high language competencies should also be demonstrating the novice level interculturality competencies.

• How much language learning is enough?

The answer lies in one's purpose for learning language as indicated below in ACTFL's *Oral Proficiency Levels in the Work World*. This table is a synthesis of data collected from employers who describe their language proficiency requirements for specific jobs and professions.

Oral Proficiency Levels in the Work World

Proficiency Levels	Language Functions	Corresponding Jobs	Examples of Who is Likely to Function at the Level
Distinguished	<i>Ability to tailor language to specific audiences, persuade, & negotiate. Deal with nuance and subtlety</i>	Diplomat, Contract Negotiator, International Specialist, Translator/Interpreter Intelligence Specialist	-Highly articulate, professionally specialized native speakers; -L2 learners with extended (17 years) and current professional and/or educational experience in the target culture
Superior	<i>Discuss topics extensively, support opinions, & hypothesize. Deal with linguistically unfamiliar situations</i>	University FL Professor, Business Executive, Lawyer, Judge, Financial Advisor	-Well- educated native speakers -Educated L2 learners with extended professional and/or educational experience in the target language environment
Advanced High	<i>Narrate and describe in past, present, and future and deal effectively with an unanticipated complication.</i>	Physician, Military Linguist, Senior Consultant, Human Resources Personnel, Financial Broker, Translation Officer, Marketing Manager, Communications Consultant	-L2 learners with graduate degrees in language-related area and extended educational experience in the target environment
Advanced Mid		Fraud Specialist, Account Executive, Court Stenographer/Interpreter,	-Heritage speakers, informal learners, non-academic learners who have significant

KENTUCKY STANDARD FOR WORLD LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Proficiency Levels	Language Functions	Corresponding Jobs	Examples of Who is Likely to Function at the Level
		Benefits Specialist, Technical Service Agent, Collection Representative, Estimating Coordinator	contact with language
Advanced Low		Customer Service Agent, Social Worker, Claims Processor, K-12 Language Teacher, Police Officer, Maintenance Administrator, Billing Clerk, Legal Secretary, Legal Receptionist	-Undergraduate language majors <i>with</i> year-long study abroad experience
Intermediate High	<i>Create with language, initiate, maintain, and bring to a close simple conversations by asking and responding to simple questions.</i>	Auto inspector, Aviation Personnel, Missionary, Tour Guide	-Undergraduate language majors <i>without</i> year-long study abroad experience
Intermediate Mid		Cashier, Sales Clerk (highly predictable contexts)	-L2 learners with 6-8 year sequences of study (AP, etc.) or 4-6 semester college sequence
Intermediate Low		Receptionist, Housekeeping Staff	- L2 learners with 4 year high school sequence or 2 semester college sequence
Novice High Novice Mid Novice Low	<i>Communicate minimally with formulaic and rote utterances, lists, and phrases.</i>	None	L2 learners after 2 years of high school study

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As indicated in the Oral Proficiency Levels in the Work World chart above, language preparation for career readiness necessitates higher levels of proficiency than established by current language requirements for high school graduation and college entrance.

Kentucky Benchmark Statements for Modern Languages

		NOVICE			INTERMEDIATE			ADVANCED		
		Low	Mid	High	Low	Mid	High	Low	Mid	High
Interpretive	Listening	I can recognize a few memorized words and phrases when I hear them spoken.	I can recognize some familiar words and phrases when I hear them spoken.	I can often understand words, phrases, and simple sentences related to everyday life. I can recognize pieces of information and sometimes understand the main topic of what is being said.	I can understand the main idea in short, simple messages and presentations on familiar topics. I can understand the main idea of simple conversations that I overhear.	I can understand the main idea in messages and presentations on a variety of topics related to everyday life and personal interests. I can understand the main idea in conversations that I overhear.	I can easily understand the main idea in messages and presentations on a variety of topics related to everyday life and personal interests and studies. I can usually understand a few details of what I overhear in conversations, even when something unexpected is expressed. I can sometimes follow what I hear about events and experiences in various timeframes.	I can understand the main idea and some supporting details in organized speech on a variety of topics of personal and general interest. I can follow stories and descriptions of some length and in various timeframes. I can understand information presented in a variety of genres on familiar topics, even when something unexpected is expressed.	I can understand the main idea and most supporting details on a variety of topics of personal and general interest as well as some topics of professional interest. I can follow stories and descriptions of some length and in various time frames. I can understand information presented in most genres even when not familiar with the topic.	I can clearly understand extended speech and short lectures, even when somewhat complicated. I can understand most forms of media with little effort.
	Reading	I can recognize a few letters or characters. I can identify a few memorized words and phrases when I read.	I can recognize some letters or characters. I can identify some learned or memorized words and phrases when I read.	I can understand familiar words, phrases, and sentences within short and simple texts related to everyday life. I can sometimes understand the main idea of what I have read.	I can understand the main idea of short and simple texts when the topic is familiar.	I can understand the main idea of texts related to everyday life, personal interests and studies.	I can easily understand the main idea of texts related to everyday life, personal interests and studies. I can sometimes follow stories and descriptions about events and experiences in various timeframes.	I can understand the main idea and some supporting details on a variety of topics of personal and general interest. I can follow stories and descriptions in some length and in various timeframes and genres.	I can understand the main idea and some supporting details on a variety of topics of personal and general interest, as well as some professional topics. I can follow stories and descriptions of considerable length and in various timeframes and genres. I can understand texts written in a variety of genres, even when I am unfamiliar with the topic.	I can easily follow narrative, informational and descriptive texts. I can understand what I read on most topics that deal with special interests, unfamiliar situations, and abstract concepts. I can sometimes understand extended arguments and different points of view.

Interpersonal	Person-To-Person	I can communicate on some very familiar topics using single words and phrases that I have practiced and memorized.	I can communicate on very familiar topics using a variety of words and phrases that I have practiced and memorized.	I can communicate and exchange information about familiar topics using phrases and simple sentences, sometimes supported by memorized language. I can usually handle short social interactions in everyday situations by asking and answering simple questions	I can participate in conversations on a number of familiar topics using simple sentences. I can handle short social interactions in everyday situations by asking and answering simple questions.	I can participate in conversations on a familiar topic using sentences and series of sentences. I can handle short social interactions in everyday situations by asking and a variety of questions. I can usually say what I want to say about myself and my everyday life.	I can participate with ease and confidence in conversations on familiar topics. I can usually talk about events and experiences in various timeframe. I can usually describe people, places, and things. I can handle social interactions in everyday situations, sometimes even when there is an unexpected complication.	I can participate in conversations about familiar topics that go beyond my everyday life. I can talk in an organized way and with some detail about events and experiences in various timeframes. I can describe people, places and things in an organized way with some detail. I can handle a familiar situation with an unexpected complication.	I can express myself fully not only on familiar topics, but also on some concrete social, academic, and professional topics. I can talk in detail and in an organized way about events and experiences in various timeframes. I can confidently handle routine situations with an unexpected complication. I can share my point of view in discussions on some complex issues.	I can express myself freely and spontaneously, and for the most part accurately, on concrete topics and on most complex issues. I can usually support my opinion and develop hypotheses on topics of particular interest or personal expertise.
	Speaking	can present information about myself and some other very familiar topics using single words or memorized phrases.	I can present information about myself and some other very familiar topics using a variety of words, phrases, and memorized expressions.	can present basic information on familiar topics using language I have practiced using phrases and simple sentences.	I can present information on most familiar topics using a series of simple sentences.	I can make presentations on a wide variety of familiar topics using connected sentences.	I can make presentations on a wide variety of familiar topics using connected sentences.	I can make presentations in a generally organized way on school, work, and community topics, and on topics I have researched. I can make some presentations on events and experiences in various timeframes.	I can deliver organized presentations appropriate to my audience on a variety of topics. I can present information about events and experiences in various timeframes.	I can deliver detailed presentations, usually with accuracy, clarity and precision, on a variety of topics and issues related to community interests and some special fields of expertise.
	Writing	I can copy some familiar words, characters, or phrases.	I can write lists and memorized phrases on familiar topics.	I can write short messages and notes on familiar topics related to everyday life.	I can write briefly about most familiar topics and provide information using a series of simple sentences.	I can write on a wide variety of familiar topics using connected sentences.	I can write on topics related to school, work, and community in a generally organized way. I can write some simple paragraphs about events and experiences in various timeframes.	I can write on general interest, academic, and professional topics. I can write organized paragraphs about events and experiences in various timeframes.	I can write on general interest, academic, and professional topics. I can write organized paragraphs about events and experiences in various timeframes.	I can write extensively with significant precision and detail on a variety of topics, most complex issues, and some special fields of expertise.

Kentucky Benchmark Statements for Modern Languages

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCIES			
Investigation of Products and Practices	<p>N.CPP</p> <p>I can identify some products and practices of cultures.</p>	<p>I.CPP</p> <p>I can identify common patterns in the products and practices of a culture.</p>	<p>A.CPP</p> <p>CULTURAL COMPETENCIES</p> <p>I can explain some diversity among the products and practices in other cultures and my own.</p>
Understanding of Cultural Perspectives	<p>N.CP</p> <p>I can identify some basic cultural beliefs and values</p>	<p>I.CP</p> <p>I can compare familiar cultural beliefs and values.</p>	<p>A.CP</p> <p>I can analyze and explain some perspectives of individuals and institutions within a society.</p>
Participation in Cultural Interaction	<p>N.CIA</p> <p>I can function at a survival level in an authentic cultural context.</p>	<p>I.CIA</p> <p>I can interact at a functional level in familiar cultural contexts.</p>	<p>A.CIA</p> <p>I can interact at a competent level in familiar and some unfamiliar cultural contexts.</p>